

Down's Syndrome Testing -- Dangerous to the Preborn!

"Prenatal testing can be done at 10 - 11 wks by chorion villus biopsy (CVS). Earlier testing is thought to be associated with a small risk of fetal limb damage. The CVS test is done earlier and is usually more rapid than amniocentesis. There is a small chance of maternal cell contamination and a 1/100 risk of miscarriage after the procedure.

Amniocentesis, a sampling of the amniotic fluid surrounding the fetus, is routinely done at 14-16 wks. Amniocentesis testing for chromosome disorders is 99.8 per cent reliable for chromosome number, and there is a risk of miscarriage (usually 1/250 or less) after the procedure.

Source: Risk and Recurrence Risk of Down Syndrome by Paul J. Benke, M.D., Ph.D. Director, Clinical Genetics Virginia Carver, Ph.D. Prenatal Diagnosis Program / Roger Donahue, Ph.D Director, Cytogenetics Laboratory Genetics Division, Department of Pediatrics University of Miami School of Medicine Miami, Fla. 33101 USA October 1995

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Screening Test for Down's Syndrome

"Currently, pregnant women age 35 or over are routinely offered amniocentesis to diagnose Down's syndrome and other chromosome disorders -- due to the well known increase in the risk for fetal Down's syndrome in older mothers. Yet, the majority of pregnancies are in younger mothers who are infrequently offered amniocentesis. The multiple marker test is commonly called "the triple test."

George Knight, PhD, Director of the Prenatal Screening Laboratory at the Foundation for Blood Research in Scarborough, Me., presents frequent continuing education programs on the triple test for the American Society of Clinical Pathologists, reviewing proper use of the test, its advantages and limitations.

"Down's syndrome is the most common of the hundreds of chromosome disorders, affecting one out of every 800 infants born in the US," Dr. Knight explained. Women over age 35 bear approximately 25 percent of these children {majority of Down's Syndrome in younger women!}

".. a number of studies have shown that the triple test can detect 60 to 70 percent of Down's syndrome cases." {Not very accurate!}

"Dr. Knight said. "A positive result does not necessarily mean the baby is affected, but is only a signal for further testing." {often undue fear is caused by not explaining this!} A common reason for a screen positive test result is incorrect calculation of the time of conception, creating an error in the gestational age for the pregnancy. An accurate gestational age is critical for interpreting the triple test. "From 25 to 50 per cent of fetal ages calculated based on last menstrual period are incorrect." ©1998, American Society of Clinical Pathologists

Can this type of test be trusted when dealing with your body and your baby?

In a New Jersey Hospital, over a 15 year period, only four (4) cases of Down's Syndrome have been noted, even though the test is now regularly done. With the obvious danger of amnio to a healthy baby (i.e. 1 in 200 chance of miscarriage), why take this risk? Many women have been told they'll have Down's Syndrome babies who didn't! Also, the only reason some do the test is so they won't be sued if a Downs baby is born. This test will do nothing for the baby, but put him/her at risk (i.e. miscarriage).

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